

Media Release

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First Dung Beetles to improve environment

Federated Farmers is watching with interest the first release of 500 Dung Beetles onto an organic dairy farm, in Southland today.

“The release today has the possibility to assist with future environmental aspects of animal dung disposal,” says Bruce Wills, Federated Farmers National President

“Dung Beetles have long been paired with livestock overseas to process their dung, but New Zealand, to date, has not had the right species to be able to withstand open fields. We are looking forward to the *Onthophagus taurus* and *Onthophagus binodus* species making their debut.

“It is estimated that animal dung covers 700,000 hectares of pastoral land in New Zealand. Dung beetles will process that dung for food and reproduction, eventually breaking it down into a sawdust-like material. Without them it can take up to a month for the dung to break down.

“The process not only gets rid of the dung, it also improves soil health and pasture productivity, reduces water and nutrient runoff, and has been shown to reduce parasitic infection in livestock.

“There is also the potential to reduce the reliance on drenching stock in the longer term as dung beetle populations grow.

“Federated Farmers is supportive of the Dung Beetle Release Strategy Group’s (DBRSG) plan to release more Dung Beetles onto farms in other parts of the country and the environmental and economic benefits that they bring,” concluded Mr Wills.

For more information please visit the DBRSG’s [website](#) , or contact,

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